

In the section entitled "Claim Rejection - 35 USC § 102" on pages 2-3 of the above-identified Office action, claims 1-10, 12-21, 23 and 26-30 have been rejected as being anticipated by Cheung et al. (US Pat. No. 6,071,795) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

In the section entitled "Claim Rejection - 35 USC § 103" on pages 3-4 of the above-identified Office action, claims 11 and 22 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Cheung et al. in view of Ashkin (US Pat. No. 3,808,550) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Applicants respectfully believe that Cheung et al. is not available to be cited as prior art with respect to the instant application. The instant application is a continuation of copending international application **PCT/DE97/02261**, filed **October 1, 1997**. Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 363, the instant application has an effective U.S. filing date of October 1, 1997, because the PCT application designated the United States. This date is prior to Cheung et al.'s U.S. filing date of January 23, 1998.

Accordingly, Cheung et al. is unavailable as prior art.

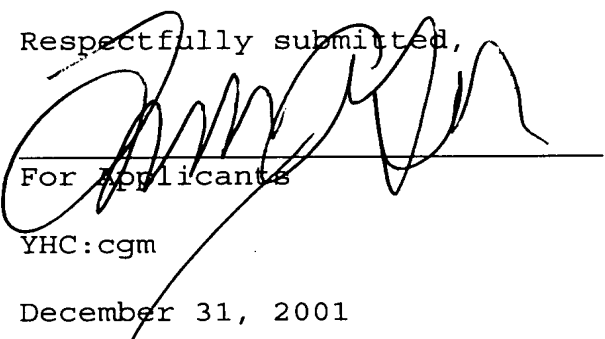
Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that the above rejections in the above-mentioned Office action under Sections 102 and 103 are moot.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-30 are solicited.

Pages 1 of 4 and 2 of 4 of the PTO-1449 form filed April 1, 1999 with the instant application have been resubmitted according to the Examiner's request in the "Interview Summary" attached to the above-mentioned Office action.

Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,



For Applicants

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